

APPENDIX VIII
HAWTHORN PREHISTORIC GLOSSARY

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Activity/Function Area - a section of an archaeological site where a definable activity took place, like a butchering, nut processing, or tool refurbishing area; characterized by specific tools and other artifacts resultant from the activity

Alluvial - refers to deposits (alluvium) of fine rock material transported by and found along the floodplain of a stream

Argillic - literally clay-like; refers to clay-like soil horizons

Artifacts - objects made by a people which are an expression of their cultural adaptation; may be technological, social, or ideological in nature

Biface - a general term for a flaked stone tool worked on two opposite sides and which possesses a lenticular cross-section; may include arrowheads, knives, spear points, and other tools

Catchment - the distance from a site within which people will travel to obtain resources

Colluvial - refers to weathered rock material transported by gravity

Culture - Man's extra-somatic (outside his body) adaptation to his environment

Discard - a stone tool thrown away after exhaustive use

Ecofacts - floral and faunal material deposited by the occupants of an archaeological site; may include fish scales, charred nutshells, seeds, and related items

Fission of Social Units - the dispersal of a macroband into microbands, possibly on a seasonal basis, for the purpose of resource acquisition, trade and exchange, or some other specialized purpose.

Flake - a piece of waste material from the manufacture of stone tools, caused by percussion or pressure applied to the object by an external agent (e.g. hammerstone, antler pressure flaker); flake itself may be further utilized as a tool

Flotation - a controlled process whereby soil from an archaeological site is sifted through fine screens immersed in a flowing water bath; small items like charcoal bits, seeds, and micro-flakes are recovered

Fusion of Social Units - the coalescence of microbands into a macroband for the purpose of mate selection, large work projects, or some other general purpose; may also be seasonal

Hunter-gatherers - peoples whose means of resource procurement is solely by hunting wild game and collecting wild seeds, nuts, and other vegetal material

Lamellae - thin, discrete layers of soil of varied color or texture within a stratigraphic profile

Macroband - an organized social group of several families, possibly arranged along kinship or ideological lines; typical size may be 40-60 people

Mesic - a vegetation pattern characterized by relatively wet-adapted plant species, such as oak and hemlock forests

Microband - a component of macroband, perhaps one or two extended families, which periodically operates independently of the macroband group

Models - constructs of adaptations which anthropologists use to explain and/or theorize about the mechanics of culture; example is a settlement pattern model

Projectile Point - strictly speaking, a biface attached to the head of an airborne item of weaponry, like an arrow or a thrown dart; frequently used indiscriminately when referring to any biface

Reject - a stone tool thrown away due to a material flaw or manufacturing error; a frequent result is the breaking of the artifact

Stratigraphy - the examination of the soil layering on an archaeological site; the characteristics of each individual stratum and its relationship to others in the sequence is critical to understanding the temporal and spatial characteristics of the site

Xeric - a vegetation pattern characterized by relatively dry-adapted plant species, such as oak and hickory forests